

Hi Joyce,

Yes, I think the Department of Health and Human services needs to issue a set of guidelines so every county is doing this the same way. Here is another example for Cascade County, which is Great Falls.

When I applied for the Holiday Happenings, Laura, (who was extremely nice) said that one temporary license could be used for the entire show. So if the show (Rachael) would buy the \$115.00 license (which covers 3 or more people) all temporary foods vendors could operate under the one license. Since, this was only my second show, and really didn't know anything, I just paid the \$85.00.

So, now Cascade County is saying they will issue a three show license for \$80.00. But what if a business only does one show in Cascade County? I think the \$115.00 per show license is a better deal and then could be split by all food vendors. **But:**

The document I got when we were in Billings (Yellowstone County) says: Temporary Food License is Required Unless (the vendor has a DPHHS License AND is serving only Non-potentially hazardous foods or the vendor has a DPHHS License AND is only serving food samples).

So, we have Wholesale Food Manufacturing Licenses issued by the Montana Department of Public Health and Human Service, I am thinking we do not need a temporary food license, **at all**, as we are already licensed with the state of MT.

This is probably why Becky's Berries did not pay the \$85.00 temporary food license, because she presented her Food Manufacturing License. Remember her saying she did not have to pay, but you and I did.

I agree, Joyce, this really needs to be clarified. The document I received from Riverstone Health (which does the license for Yellowstone County) clearly states that if you have DPHHS License and are only serving food samples or non-potentially hazardous foods (which is me with muffins, if fact they give that as an example) we do not need a temporary food license.

As I read through the document, it appears the temporary license is for an establishment that comes to an event, such as a fair, rodeo, etc, and does not have a license from Montana, so they are issued a temporary one.

Another subject, do you go the the Home and Garden shows, will you be in Billings?

Other then the letters, let me know what you want me to do. Should we contact the Head of the MT Dept of Health & Human Services for clarification?

Dear _____

I am a food manufacturer in Montana and enjoy what I do but myself and many other food vendors have run into a problem we need help with. We would like the Temporary Food Permit law changed. It is currently good for 14 days but that is only for one event, which works for a summer stretch if you are serving samples at a farmer's market. However, the law applies to any event where the food vendors want to serve samples even if it is a one day, two day or longer trade show. If a vendor is considering doing a craft/trade show, we consider the booth fee (which can be a considerable amount of money), automobile gas, food while away from home and lodging. Now, we must add the \$85 for the Temporary Food Permit on top of all those other charges before we can even start to see a profit for our show. You are probably wondering why we are just now asking to get this changed and that is because while the law has been on the books for awhile, two new hires in the Public Health Dept in Helena took it upon themselves to enforce this law. It seems so unfair that I wonder, that before they started enforcing this law, why it didn't occur to them to maybe take a look at it and try to make it a little more fair. Before, many counties sent their health inspectors to shows we were doing but only checked to make sure we were following rules for health safety while serving food or samples without charging us the extra \$85.. What we would like to propose is to continue to charge \$85 for 14 events but then go to a tiered system to coincide with the number of days of the show. Maybe \$25 for a one day show and then a small increase from there. Another thought is to charge a flat rate for the year and I've been told that is what the State charges for food vendors doing food demos at grocery stores or other places where they sell their products. Isn't that what we are doing at a craft/trade show?

Most of the vendors I've met, and not just food producers, take a great deal of pride being in the "Made in Montana" program. Speaking for my business, we sell huckleberry products to tourists in the summer for them to take back home. They want something that is all about Montana so being in the Made in Montana program works perfectly and that is why we strongly support that program. We do this for the State of Montana so now could you give back a little bit of help to us who are on the front lines promoting this incredible State?

Thank you for your time and all of my information is at the top of this letter so feel free to contact me about this issue if you have any further questions.

I'm sorry I said that wrong....its not just an issue with samples for us...here we've had to obtain the \$85.00 permit just to participate in a SINGLE event so 2 events in a weekend cost us \$170.00 just for the permits....We're hoping that this changes so that a single \$85.00 permit will cover multiple events/days even if the events are different or lower the cost if multiple permits are purchased...we've turned down many good local events just because its not cost effective between the permits, space rentals, cost of goods, travel etc etc (you know the cost I'm talking about). The costs for Ren faire in Stevensville for the weekend means we have to draw \$600-\$700 in sales just to break even...that's nuts...

What we've looked into is obtaining a wholesale food license which would be cost effective and allow us to expand into additional areas besides just events. problem there is its lengthy process getting the packaging/labeling approved by the state. Each different package/label needs to be approved by the state, so the best route is to try to minimize packaging/labeling choices to as few as possible which is no easy task when you cross multiple product lines and have multiple size/shape products.

Until we're able to work that that out it would be quite helpful to get laws passed to change/amend the current temp food permits in the vendors favor.

Thank you for your business.
Chris & Ronni
gourmet_goodies@aol.com

June 13, 2008

Governor Brian Schweitzer
Office of the Governor
Montana State Capitol Bldg.
P.O. Box 200801
Helena, Mt. 59620-0801

Dear Governor Schweitzer:

I have enclosed a copy of some paperwork I recently received from the Missoula City-County Health Department, Environmental Health Division. Actually they only sent me the page, which starts with "Regulation 4" and it was not accompanied with a letter or any explanation...just the envelope and the piece of paper. I have enclosed the memorandum which should have accompanied it, that I printed off their website.

You must be wondering why I am writing to your office about this little piece of information. There is much more to this issue than meets the eye and I am trying to get some attention before the Health Board meeting is held on June 18. In the past, people needing a temporary food permit completed the application documents, paid their appropriate fee for the license and turned it in to the Health Department. If there were no questions, we were mailed our State License. Then last year the health department took a proposal to the Health Board and it was passed and below is how the proposal is written:

If plan review(application) is submitted 3 – 5 business days before event, the applicant must pay an extra \$50.

If plan review is submitted less than 3 business days before event, the applicant must pay an extra \$75

If plan review is done at the event, the applicant must pay an extra \$100

Now they want to add that **all plan reviews** must be accompanied with \$25.

Also, they have passed a regulation that states our temporary food license is only good for 14 days. As for me, I need a temporary food permit to give away samples of my products at the Missoula Saturday Market, which is approximately 24 Saturdays. I have to give them a schedule showing the Saturdays I chose to work the market. This limited time drastically cuts into any vendor's income.

Now that you know the background into my letter, please let me explain why I adamantly oppose this. I produce my products in a commercial kitchen in Ravalli County and I do sell to some retail accounts so just to operate, I pay \$150 per year for my retail and manufacturing license. I also had to attend a class at Washington State University in order for me to produce low acids foods, which cost me almost \$500 including gasoline and hotel. Also, in order for me to give away samples at the Missoula Saturday Market, I then must pay an additional \$60 for my temporary food permit. Now, on top of those



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January 26, 2015

Fred Thomas
1004 S BURNT FORK RD
STEVENSVILLE, MT 59870-6658

Dear Mr. Thomas:

I am a food manufacturer in Montana and enjoy what I do but myself and many other food vendors have run into a problem we need help with. We would like the Temporary Food Permit law changed. It is currently good for 14 days but that is only for one event, which works if you are doing a summer stretch if you are serving samples at a farmer's market. However, the law applies to any event where the food vendors want to serve samples even if it is a one day, two day or longer trade show. If a vendor is considering doing a craft/trade show, we consider the booth fee (which can be a considerable amount of money), automobile gas, food while away from home and lodging. Now, we must add the \$85 for the Temporary Food Permit on top of all those other charges before we can even start to see a profit for our show. You are probably wondering why we are just now asking to get this changed and that is because while the law has been on the books for awhile, two new hires in the Public Health Dept in Helena took it upon themselves to enforce this law. It seems so unfair that I wonder before they started enforcing this law, why it didn't occur to them to maybe take a look at it and try to make it a little more fair for the vendors. Before, many counties sent their health inspectors to shows we were doing but only checked to make sure we were following rules for health safety while serving food or samples without charging us the extra \$85.

What we would like to propose is to continue to charge \$85 for 14 events but then go to a tiered system to coincide with the number of days of the show. Maybe \$25 for a one day show and then a small increase from there. Another thought is to charge a flat rate for the year and I've been told that is what the State charges for food vendors doing food demos at grocery stores or other places where they sell their products. Isn't that what we are doing at a craft/trade show?

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The Made in Montana vendors currently have no one to help us out concerning raising fees or any law that will impact our self employed business. Please try to help us any way you can.

I respect your job and what you have to do to keep Montana citizens health. We food vendors want that also but we want our fees and licenses to be fair. Thank you for your time and all of my information is at the top of this letter so feel free to contact me about this issue if you have any further questions.

Sincerely,

Joyce Previte